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Honors Physics Period 2

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Assignment 9

Amory Lovins is chairman and chief scientist of the Rocky Mountain Institute. He is widely known for his innovative ideas pertaining to renewable energy. He is an advocate of soft energy paths, involving efficient energy use, diverse and renewable energy sources, and special reliance on "soft energy technologies." Soft energy technologies include those based on geothermal, solar, biofuels, wind, etc. Residential solar energy technologies are the fundamental aspect of the soft energy strategy.

Lovins spoke out against the hard energy path, which are the most widely used sources of energy today. These sources of energy include the burning of fossil fuels (e.g. coal or petroleum), or harnessing a nuclear fission reaction. He describes these sources of energy as an inefficient use of energy and centralized, non-renewable, source of energy, which incurs the vulnerabilities and the high cost of the electric grid. Lovins main concern was the danger of meeting a societies energy needs, due primarily to its poor economics and high risk of fostering nuclear energy proliferation.

He is also an advocate of the negawatt revolution. A negawatt is the opposite of a watt, which instead of the amount of energy consumed, it’s the amount of energy saved. He argues that utility customers doesn’t want kW hours of electricity, instead they want electricity that comes more cheaply and efficiently. According to Lovin’s, energy efficiency represents a trillion-dollar a year savings for both the global market and the American market. It’s simply a win-win solution both economically and environmentally.

References:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amory_Lovins>

<http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1894410_1893209_1893457,00.html>